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CHARLES INGALL, Actuary.

NORWICH MUSICAL FESTIVAL.

(From our own Correspondents.)

Tuesday, Sept. 18.—Of all cathedral cities we should have considered Norwich the least likely to support a triennial musical festival, and such a festival as that of A.D. 1860. The united choirs of Gloucester, Worcester, and Hereford have an annual meeting, but the Norwich festival is strictly triennial, and it might have been thought that the increasing thirst after music would have induced the good folk of the eastern counties to travel to London in the intermediate years, the railway communication being convenient, and so have left no appetite for the good things put forward by the promoters of the meeting. However, the present festival offers so many attractions, in the shape of creative and executive art, that the ancient city may fairly compete with London itself. Two works new to the world are to be performed, and one new to Norwich, and the best attainable artists have been engaged for the oratorios and concerts. Success, therefore, is deserved, and we hope to be able to chronicle a complete triumph. Norwich labours under some disadvantages with regard to its festival. The great charm of such events consists in the oratorios being performed in a sacred edifice, where the necessary quietude of the audience, together with the hallowed associations of the building, disposes the mind to an attention which can never be bestowed in a concert-room. Norwich has a cathedral, a noble building, eminently calculated for such performances, but the representation of oratorios is interdicted by the diocesan authorities, we suppose, as a desecration. Without entering into a discussion of this *veto*, we may congratulate Norwich on having so good a room to fall back upon as St. Andrew's Hall, in which the festivals are held. This building accommodates about the same number as Exeter Hall, so that it is not a mere makeshift.

The Norwich festival differs from those given in the western cathedral cities in the fact of there being no collection at the doors after the morning performances. It therefore argues much for the spirit of the place that since the first festival was held (in 1824) a profit of £8,270. 2s. 9d. has been realised in favour of various local charities.

Notwithstanding the revolutions which the railways have created, not alone in travelling, but in the habits of society in general, and its amusements, festivals in this, as in a few places of larger population, continue to exist, although apprehension has arisen that their existence might be shortened by the facilities which the public enjoy in reaching London. There, in the season, every singer of note is found, and performances in some respects equalling those of the provincial festivals can be heard, to satisfy the most enthusiastic amateur, and at a less cost. As excellence is absolutely necessary in these days, and as the demand for the best artists, vocal and instrumental, is much greater than when festivals were first established, the difficulty is so to concentrate these and other requisites, as to enable its managers to realise a fair profit for the charities. Of late, Norwich festivals cannot be said, to have answered from a commercial point of view; but a much stronger appeal than usual is now made to the public aid, through official sources and otherwise. We take no notice of the preliminary rehearsals, for the simple reason that, however good in themselves, they do not enable a sound judgment to be formed of a new work. The most careful rehearsal, from the absence of the principal instrumentalists, must be imperfect. There are those who may recollect the excessive labour attendant on the rehearsals of former days. Now it seems as if, even in a new work, such is the perfection instrumentalists have attained, that rarely indeed are frequent repetitions required. And well it is so, for with the quantity of music now crammed into the performances, the rehearsals would scarce finish ere the concert began.

On Monday evening the festival (or rather prelude to the festival) commenced by a sort of bye concert, at a cheaper rate—five shillings the area, ten shillings and sixpence to patrons' gallery—enabling those who cannot afford high prices to partake in the musical treat of the week. The selection was that universal favourite, the *Creation*. No better choice could have been made, if only because it gave the audience an opportunity of hearing all the English vocalists. The attendance, although fair, about 1,000,

was not equal to what was anticipated. The patrons' gallery and area were full, but the galleries not. In earlier festivals there have been as many as 2,300 persons in the hall; but of late years, whether the orchestra occupies more space, or from what other cause, the committee seem unable to accommodate so large an audience. This no doubt makes a considerable difference in the general receipts, as the later evenings and the *Messiah* are always the most crowded. The *Creation* went off bright and sparkling, from beginning to end. Mad. Novello, Mr. Sims Reeves, Mr. and Mrs. Weiss, Mr. Santley, Mr. Wilby Cooper, all sang their allotted parts with their accustomed excellence. The band was admirable, and the chorus almost faultless.

Wednesday, September 19.—The festival proper has been inaugurated brilliantly. At the first miscellaneous concert last night, most of the executants were in capital "condition," and the programme combined sufficient novelty with a good selection of pieces that have been tried and not found wanting. Viewed from a business aspect, the success was not so brilliant. The hall was well filled, but not crowded. On the other hand, the demand for tickets for this evening and for Friday's *Messiah* has so far exceeded the supply that the committee have erected an extra gallery above the seats reserved for "patrons" at the east end of the hall. This gallery is a substantial structure supported on iron columns. As it is situated immediately opposite the orchestra, its occupants will be placed on *ne peut mieux*, both for seeing and hearing. The interest excited by this evening's performance, and by that of Friday morning, affords another instance of the affection for familiar works and the prejudice against those unknown which distinguishes us from all other nations. Last night's concert derived special interest from the production of an opera which, written eighty-three years ago, is so aged and forgotten that it is quite new; to-morrow is to be made memorable by the first public trial of a new *cantata*; but people seem rather to avoid these attractions in order to make sure of to-night, which is remarkable for nothing but the *May Queen*. Dr. Bennett's *cantata* cannot be called old, as it has only been two years before the world; but its merits received such immediate acknowledgment that it has already become a "classic," and, therefore, comes into the category of received works. Of course we always affirm that it is our national fidelity and steadfastness which makes us listen with devout attention to acknowledged masterpieces. Still we have heard foreigners assert that it is to our ineradicable shopkeeping propensities that this peculiarity is to be ascribed; in other words, that we are prudent even in our pleasures, and, *en vraie nation boutiquière*, prefer taking our money on a sure card, investing our superfluous cash in a certainty rather than in a speculation. But, whatever the reason, such is the fact, and, as long as it continues to be so, we must not complain if the compilers of programmes lay this truth to heart. We are, however, quite at liberty to praise when we find bold departures from this safe but unsatisfactory principle; and in this respect Norwich merits honourable distinction. The concert last night was rendered particularly interesting by a selection from *Armida*. We have watched with attention the increasing interest which the works of Gluck inspire. Even if it be a mere fashion it is one that cannot fail to bring good results. Our readers will remember the success of *Orfeo* at Covent Garden this summer, and also that of *Iphigenia* at St. James's Hall, which surprised most listeners into a confession that to them Gluck had been until then unknown. The general appreciation of his labours has emboldened Mr. Charles Hallé to announce the performance of a third opera of the same master at Manchester. A selection from this arrangement of *Armida* was performed last night. All dramatic compositions lose effect when removed from the stage, but of all composers Gluck suffers most. His intense desire to be dramatic led him into that famous warfare, which the mention of his name invariably calls up. But after all, tacitly or openly, this rivalry between art moulded on art and art founded on nature, has been going on since art first began. It is instanced as plainly in Palissy the potter, and Rossetti the painter, as in Gluck the musician. Without comparing the intellectual powers of the two, we may suggest the resemblance between Gluck and Wagner, not only in the ideas that animate, but also in the self-assertion that characterises both. If Wagner's present venture in France prove

a success, the resemblance will be rendered still more striking. After all, Wagner seems to aim at the same object by a noisy revolution which Meyerbeer, for many years, has been striving to effect by gradual reformation. In each succeeding work we see Meyerbeer discarding more and more the formal artifices of his predecessors, in order to make his compositions more thoroughly dramatic; and the theory which Wagner preaches, as if it were a new evangel of which he is the apostle, is little else than a *réchauffé* of Gluck's creed—an amplification of the suggestion thrown out by Mad. Dudevant (Georges Sand) in the letter on *Les Huguenots*, addressed to Meyerbeer some fifteen years ago. From the introductory matter to the new edition of *Armida*, edited by Mr. C. Hallé, we extract the following:—

"In the original French opera-book *Armida* is designated as a *Drame Heroïque*. It might more correctly be styled a romantic rather than heroic legend, setting forth in picturesque contrast the strife betwixt sensual pleasure and courageous duty. The story is as old as Christianity. It was shadowed out in the early mysteries, where the Goddess Venus and her seduction of chaste and noble warriors figured. Again and again has the same combination appeared under different costumes and disguises. It is one of the very few inventions which exist in the world of fiction, and is possibly the first Christian legend which in drama was allowed to take a place of interest, reputed as equal to that attaching itself to the marvels of pagan mythology."

Here, again, we might call attention to the similarity of subject between *Armida* and *Tannhäuser*, in which Venus, like Gluck's Enchantress, holds her knight in silken toils, and which depicts the struggle between love and duty. To go further, might we not point to the duet in the fourth act of the *Huguenots*, where the subject is humanised and elevated? The scenes selected last night, from the second and third acts, form a tolerably complete story. They comprised a duet (Mad. Clara Novello and Mr. Santley), in which Armida concerts with Hidraot the destruction of Roland; an air for Roland in the enchanted garden, which suggests by its soothing character the gradual influence of the magic scene upon the knight, until he is lulled to sleep (sung to absolute perfection by Mr. Sims Reeves)—a strain of delicious melody that haunts the memory long after its notes have died away; a *scena*, showing Armida herself, vanquished by love, lamenting her weakness, and then bursting out into an invocation to Hate—as grand and dramatic a composition as can well be imagined (finely declaimed by Mad. Novello); an air with chorus, "Love shall no longer reign," in which Hate promises deadly opposition to her rival (extremely well delivered by Mad. Weiss); and a recitative, in which Armida bewails her passion. Here the selection terminated, but it might have very well been carried on to the end of the opera. We should then have learnt that two companion knights of Roland, after successfully resisting the fascinations of the enchanted garden, finally rescue him from the "silken dalliance" into which he has subsided, and honour and duty triumph. We repeat that Gluck's music loses infinitely in the concert-room, and is proportionately ineffective in detached pieces; but if the great composer was so powerfully dramatic when dealing with the unsubstantial creatures of romance, what would he have been if he had taken humanity for his theme?

Armida was not the only novelty. A soprano solo, "To please and then instruct mankind," sung by Mad. Weiss, and a bass solo, for Mr. Weiss, with chorus, "In pæans loud," from a cantata entitled *Hypatia*, were by Mr. J. F. Hill, chorus master of the festival. Mr. H. H. Pierson, whose oratorio, *Jerusalem*, was performed here some eight years ago, was also represented by an accompanied part song, to Campbell's "Ye mariners of England." The chorus gave this *con amore*, and the enthusiastic encore it elicited must be attributed rather to its energetic execution by 260 fresh and admirably trained voices than to any other cause. Mlle. Titiens made her first appearance in Norwich, and received a cordial welcome. There is little scope for effect in the soprano part of "A te o cara," but the brilliancy of the Hungarian lady's voice produced almost as much effect on the audience as the delicious warbling by Signor Giuglini in the opening solo, one of the most exquisite melodies that ever emanated from the most plaintively melodious of composers. The audience had already unsuccessfully endeavoured to get several pieces repeated, but in this case the encore was too enthusiastic to be denied. Mlle. Titiens surprised her audience beyond measure in "Casta Diva," and her

grand delivery of the majestic melody of the *largo*, as well as her energetic execution of the *cabaletta*, were worthy of the applause she excited. The audience could not have exhibited greater warmth even if they had known that Mlle. Titiens was suffering from such severe indisposition as would have justified her in not appearing at all. Mad. Borghi-Mamo's success was scarcely less decided. She was heard to most advantage in the air from the *Donna del Lago*, "Oh quante lagrime," although she produced a marked effect in the Neapolitan barcarole, "Santa Lucia." Mad. Novello was much applauded in the charming aria of Benedict and De Beriot, "Prendi per me." Miss Palmer sang with passionate earnestness Mr. J. W. Davison's setting of Shelley's song, "Swifter far than summer flight,"—an exquisite illustration of one of the most perfect gems by the most purely poetical of all poets, and breathing the very spirit of the original "Lament," with all its delicate and tender grace; and Herr Molique's melodious ballad, "When the moon is brightly shining," was sung with the utmost refinement of expression by Mr. Sims Reeves, the effect in both the latter instances being heightened by Mr. Benedict's perfect accompaniment on the pianoforte. The instrumental performances were by no means inferior to the vocal. Miss Arabella Goddard has helped so much to popularise Mendelssohn's G minor concerto, that we need only repeat for the hundredth time that the fair pianist's execution is not merely mechanically irreproachable, but that it exhibits how thoroughly the performer is imbued with the intentions of the composer. The slow movement, with its lovely violoncello accompaniment, and the finale, with its exuberance of joyful energy, were both played to perfection. The same words will apply with as much force to Signor Piatti's incomparable performance of his own fantasia on airs from *Linda di Chamouni*. The orchestral pieces consisted of Beethoven's symphony in C minor, and the overtures to *Masaniello* and *Zampa*, both of which were given to perfection under the skilful guidance of Mr. Benedict. The mayor was present in the patrons' gallery with belt, sword, mace, and all the insignia of state, in pursuance of the following praiseworthy resolution:—

"At a meeting of the council of the body corporate of the mayor, aldermen, and citizens of the city of Norwich, held on the 5th day of September, 1860, it was moved by Sir William Foster, Bart., seconded by John Godwin Johnson, Esq., and resolved unanimously: 'That this council, considering that the love of music which distinguishes this city is a subject of just pride, and that the triennial festivals are the fruit and reward of long devotedness to this ennobling pursuit, earnestly calls upon the citizens by themselves, and through their friends and connections, to promote in every way in their power the success of an enterprise which reflects so much credit on all concerned; being assured that such a success would be a gain for music and lovers of music everywhere, an encouragement to local talent, an assistance to deserving charities, and especially gratifying to all who wish well to this ancient city. And, to exhibit practically the interest which the corporation takes in the forthcoming festival, a committee was appointed to co-operate with the committee of management, and to afford it all possible support and assistance.'

"At a meeting of the committee of council, held the 11th day of September instant, it was unanimously resolved: '1. That it would be the best possible proof of the hearty good feeling of the citizens towards the festival, and a great encouragement to the committee of management and the choral society, were the corporation, with their ladies and friends, to attend the first miscellaneous concert on Tuesday evening.' '2. That the mayor be requested to invite the members of the corporation, and at the same time, the sheriffs, magistrates, and other leading citizens, to concur in this demonstration of the best wishes of the city for the success of this noble enterprise.'

"J. HENRY TILLET, Mayor.

"Guildhall, 11th September, 1860."

The italics are *not* our own.

Thursday, Sept. 20. — The success of the festival is now no longer a matter of speculation, but a certainty. The bright weather continuing of course exercises a favourable influence; but, on the other hand, the attractions of the programme are so many and so great that no wonder the tickets for admission, both at the morning and evening performances, should be purchased with avidity. The splendid edifice in which the concerts are held is of itself sufficient to attract visitors; and its acoustical properties being no less remarkable than its architectural beauties,

the *beau idéal* of a music-hall is realised. In short, whether as an arena for civic assemblies, or as a place of public entertainment, St. Andrew's Hall is unrivalled in England: at once ornamental and useful, it is a monument of which the city may be proud, and a receptacle the value of which can hardly be over-estimated by the inhabitants. When lighted up at night its appearance is dazzling, while the ecclesiastical style of its architecture, both interior and exterior, materially aids the illusion at the oratorio performances in the morning. All day long the approaches to St. Andrew's Hall are crowded; so that but for the excellent arrangements of the police it would be somewhat difficult for visitors (especially at night) to gain access to the building. The good people of Norwich, who at the beginning of the week could not be kept indoors by the very inclement weather, were not likely to be debarred from exercising their curiosity in the open air when "the rain was over and gone," the sky was unclouded overhead, and the comfortable sun shed light and warmth on every object.

The *Dettingen Te Deum*, and the *Last Judgment*, both superbly given, would merit a column of description; nevertheless, they must be passed over with a word. The singers in the *Te Deum* were Mad. Weiss and Miss Palmer, Messrs. Sims Reeves and Weiss; the principal trumpet part in the bass solo with chorus, "Thou art the King of Glory" (Mr. Weiss), being executed by Mr. T. Harper with as much truth of intonation as though he had been playing easy passages on the easiest of instruments, instead of passages more difficult than any elsewhere met with, even in the scores of Handel, who wrote not seldom so perplexingly for the trumpet as to incline many to the belief that it was in his time a different kind of instrument from the one subsequently employed. Of singers so well known as those we have named, in a work so familiar as the *Dettingen Te Deum*, it is requisite to say no more than that they did their best, and that better could not have been desired. The *Last Judgment*—in which Mad. Novello took the soprano music, and Mr. Sims Reeves sang the tenor part for the first time (so admirably, by the way, that the lovers of Spohr's music earnestly hope it may not be for the last)—made as deep an impression as at any performance of the same great work we are able to recall. The Norwich amateurs have an affection for this oratorio, which first introduced Spohr to their notice, at the festival of 1830, on Friday, the 24th of September, when Sir George Smart was conductor, Mad. Stockhausen and Mrs. Knyvett, Master Phillips, Messrs. Braham (the elder), Vaughan, Terrail, and Edward Taylor (the Gresham Musical Professor), were the singers, and Mori, Wagstaff, Lindley, Dragonetti, Nicholson, Grattan Cooke, Willmann, Powell, Mackintosh, Platt, Harper, Chipp, &c. (all eminent performers, of whom only two are now living) among the members of the orchestra. The alto part (allotted yesterday to Miss Palmer) was intrusted to a gentleman—a counter-tenor (Mr. Terrail, so well remembered at glee parties and other convivial meetings). We doubt, however, if, with all this array of names, the *Last Judgment* was nearly so well rendered as on the occasion under notice—30 years later. What used to pass muster then would hardly be accepted now without a protest; and with respect to singers, Mad. Novello and Mr. Sims Reeves are not bad substitutes for Mad. Stockhausen and the elder Braham; the rich contralto of the clever and improving Miss Palmer is assuredly preferable to the shrill tones of a counter-tenor; while, for sacred music, a more satisfactory barytone-bass in every sense than Mr. Santley could not be singled out. On the vast improvements made by our choristers and orchestral players during the last quarter of a century it is unnecessary to insist. The choruses were without exception finely sung (even "Destroyed is Babylon" being as steady in time and tune as it is too frequently the opposite), and the instrumental preludes to the 1st and 2d parts of the oratorio were performed by the band in such a manner as to display their manifold and exquisite beauties in the most thoroughly effective light.

The new oratorio has been tested and come forth from the ordeal triumphantly. If not absolutely a great work, it is in every sense the work of a great musician, and has raised its composer, high as he has always been previously rated, a step higher than he stood before. It shows him a master of the choir as well as of the orchestra, capable of dealing with a lofty Scriptural

subject, and able to sustain himself on the point of elevated expression indispensable to its proper treatment, besides possessing that thorough familiarity with technical resources which allows the application of those elaborate contrivances in which the greatest masters of the art have delighted to exercise their ingenuity and show their power. All we can add now is, that the oratorio (solo-singers—Mad. Novello, Mad. Weiss, Miss Palmer; Messrs. Sims Reeves, Wilbye Cooper, Santley, and Belletti) was performed under the direction of Herr Molique himself, who was enthusiastically received on appearing in the orchestra, and as enthusiastically applauded at the end of his work. Two pieces were redemanded and repeated, at the request of the Mayor of Norwich (the Lord-Lieutenant, strange to say, not being present on this occasion). To conclude, musical Norwich has added another laurel to its already goodly wreath, and done honour to itself in honouring one who has shown himself so worthy of distinction.

Friday, Sept. 21.—*Abraham*, by general admission, is not merely a success, but a legitimate success. Those who previously knew anything of the composer, and recognised in him one of the foreigners whose residence among us exercises the most salutary influence, whose example and teaching produce in an equal measure valuable results, and whose earnest devotion to art in its purest and highest signification have won them places among the ranks of music's chosen expositors, were not surprised to find in Herr Molique the author of a work so lofty in design and so masterly in execution. Others less intimately acquainted with the current history of art-progress, and to whom his name was comparatively unfamiliar, or at best only known as that of an eminent performer and composer for the violin, were probably taken aback by this evidence of a new and unexpected talent. Both sides, however, were ready to acknowledge the unusual merit of *Abraham*, and to hail it unreservedly as the best specimen of oratorio writing since *Elijah*. This was felt more and more strongly as number succeeded number, yesterday, in St. Andrew's Hall; and the grand chorus which terminates the first part left no further doubt on the matter. A second part was to follow, it is true; but no one anticipated any falling off; on the contrary, people felt sure of the rest, and looked forward to experience still increasing satisfaction. Conscious that for more than an hour a genuine master had been ministering to their entertainment, they were content to allow that master to conduct them where he listed, persuaded that he enjoyed alike the power to edify and the gift to please. Halévy, the French composer, observing with anxiety the silence of his instructor, Cherubini, while some trivial flatterers were extolling, in unmeasured terms, the beauties of *La Juive*, addressed the moody, if not morose, Italian as follows: "*Maitre! vous ne me dites rien?*" "*Puisque tu ne m'as rien dit,*" was the brief and significant retort of Cherubini. But when, at the end of the first and second parts of *Abraham*, Herr Molique turned towards the conglomerate of Cherubinis, who, in the shape of the crowded audience of St. Andrew's Hall, sat there to pronounce judgment according to the dictates of the impressions they had received, they left him no time to put the Halévyan query. He had really said so much to them, and which they had so thoroughly appreciated, that spontaneously, and without giving a moment to consideration, they recorded a unanimous verdict in his favour. The members of the orchestra and chorus—not anticipating the decision of the public, as is too frequently the unwarranted and anomalous practice—merely echoed it; but echoed it with such hearty acclamations as allowed no question of their unqualified approval.

The book of *Abraham* (prepared, as we are informed, by the composer) is modelled after that of *Elijah* (the compilation, as all the world knows, of Mendelssohn himself). The text of every piece consists of some extract from Sacred Writ, appropriate to the matter in hand. To this an objection has been made, specious enough, but which, if enforced, would greatly restrict the domain of the oratorio. Here it is, nevertheless:—

"The merits of *Elijah* are due to the composer having followed the bent of a dramatic genius. The absence of Scripture phraseology would have detracted nothing from these merits. When the sacred text happens to accommodate itself naturally and gracefully to the subject, a beauty is gained by its use. But to force the union is to injure both.

Neither can it be pleaded that truth supplies the place of discarded fiction. To put the words of one man into the mouth of another—to apply to one event what was said of another, to destroy old associations by the substitution of new—may be perfectly justifiable, may even be advantageous, but surely it is not adherence to truth."

That Mendelssohn's dramatic genius was not greater than his genius as a religious composer, his psalms (one of the most beautiful of which was performed immediately after *Abraham*, yesterday), together with many sublime passages in *St. Paul* and *Elijah*, amply demonstrate. Take away from those masterpieces such devotional pieces as, "But the Lord is mindful of His own," "Cast thy burden upon the Lord," "He that shall endure to the end," &c., and they would be shorn of half their beauties. It is, indeed, this "interfusion of styles" condemned by the writer of the above sentences, which has enabled not only Mendelssohn but Handel himself to obtain some of the noblest results of which the oratorio is capable. That there exists, properly speaking, only one "sacred oratorio," is, we believe, admitted; and even the *Messiah* presents instances of *quasi* dramatic treatment which would almost lay it open to the same critical objection. It should be borne in mind, moreover, that an oratorio is not an anthem; and, indeed, an anthem nearly three hours long would be a tedious affair, calculated rather to fatigue than to elevate. Even in their psalms the great composers have endeavoured to gain variety through the medium of a descriptive colouring bordering on dramatic expression, wherever the text offered a suggestion that could serve their turn. Besides, an oratorio—even a sacred oratorio, like the *Messiah*—is a very different thing from an act of worship, and originated from an entirely different point of view. Herr Molique, then, in our opinion, was perfectly justified in resorting to the form he has adopted. He has made none of his characters do anything for which the Book of *Genesis* is not warrant, nor say anything that they might not reasonably be presumed to have said (taking the incidents of *Genesis* as groundwork) under the circumstances. The citations from the Prophets, the *Psalms*, *Deuteronomy*, *Judges*, *Lamentations*, *Job*, and the *Revelations* are all to the purpose; and by their employment the composer has secured an element of contrast that would otherwise be wanting to his oratorio. How Herr Molique has put the materials of his plot together was shown yesterday.

About the music of *Abraham* a few scattered observations must at present suffice. A work of serious and elaborate character, which must have cost the author so many days and nights of earnest reflection, of both mental and physical labour, should not be dismissed as if it were merely an ephemeral production. The high opinion which a single hearing has warranted us in pronouncing is not destined, we feel assured, to be weakened by closer familiarity, but is rather likely to be fortified by the discovery of beauties which, not being immediately on the surface, reveal themselves less readily at first. Herr Molique has evidently written not so much with a view of exciting pleasurable emotions or eliciting momentary admiration by the production of separate and what are denominated "striking" effects as with that of producing a work complete as a whole and symmetrical in all its parts. He has succeeded, and, though at times deeply influenced by the example of Mendelssohn (the extraordinary fascination of whose manner, as developed in the oratorios of *St. Paul* and *Elijah*, it seems impossible to resist), so deeply, indeed, as occasionally to paraphrase and copy (we have not said plagiarise) some of that composer's most salient characteristics, he more than once approaches the solemn dignity of Handel, emulates the grace and ingenuity of Mozart, and even attains the cheerful and healthy vigour of Haydn. These compound elements make up an individuality which may fairly lay claim to be denominated "Molique," and are handled with such wonderful facility and cleverness that it is impossible at any moment to confound them with the pale reflections and attenuated parodies of recognised masters in which modern art unhappily abounds—most especially among the direct followers of Mendelssohn and Spohr (the last-named a model, by the way, for whom the strong partiality once evinced by the composer of *Abraham* seems to be now virtually extinguished). Always strong, often elevated, in his choruses; forcible in his narrational and declamatory recitatives, expressive and melodious in his airs and vocal concerted pieces, Herr Molique adds to these

desirable qualifications, a thorough knowledge of contrapuntal contrivance (witness the admirable clearness of his fugues and imitative passages), which he is enabled to exhibit with the greater felicity, inasmuch as he is a master of all the resources of orchestral colouring, and employs them not only with invariable freedom, but with consummate judgment, the rich and elaborate instrumentation of his grand choruses and more important pieces being not more remarkable than his sober and delicate scoring of the recitatives and solo airs.

The performance of this fine work, though unequal in merit, was in many respects surpassingly good. The solo soprano music was done great justice to by Mad. Clara Novello and Mad. Weiss. Miss Palmer, as the contralto, sang with even more than her usual excellence, and as much may be said for Mr. Santley, who had a very arduous part to perform, and acquitted himself most honourably. To Mr. Wilbye Cooper, too, great praise is due for his tasteful and musically rendering of a part of the solo tenor music; and Signor Belletti should be highly extolled, if only because, like a genuine artist, he accepted a very small part, for the sake of strengthening the "cast" of the oratorio. Mr. Sims Reeves, too, had but little to do, but that little included one of the most impressive songs in the oratorio, which he sang so magnificently as to carry off the chief honours of the performance. The band and chorus, under the direction of Herr Molique, were highly satisfactory.

(To be concluded in our next number.)

Impromptu Parody on "Sweet Love, Good Night," as sung by Sims Reeves on Wednesday Evening at the NORWICH FESTIVAL. By a Martyr in the Patrons' Gallery.

The husband leaves his easy chair
With sad and sleepy eye;
He thinks upon his pot of beer,
And heaves the bitter sigh.
But, ah! he feels not half the woe
That now is felt by me,
Whene'er I hear the muffs below,
Sims Reeves! encoring thee.

The husband views his pipe of clay,
With calm it fills his heart;
It soothes his mind to see away
Each circling puff depart.
Then let me blow at home the cloud
That brings such peace to me,
Nor never hear another crowd,
Sims Reeves! encoring thee.

A. A. V.

[The above luminous effusion was picked up in St. Andrew's Hall, Norwich, after the second concert of the festival on Wednesday evening.—Ed.]

THE ACCIDENT TO MR. H. SAKER.—The accident at the Princess's Theatre has resulted in a more serious injury to Mr. H. Saker than was at first anticipated. We are enabled to state he is now out of danger, but he will not be able to resume his professional duties for some weeks.

THE "ERA" VERSUS THE "ATHENEUM."—Some weeks ago we recorded in these columns the announcement of an engagement having been made by Mr. E. T. Smith, the lessee of Her Majesty's Theatre, which secured the valuable services of Signor Mario at that establishment, at the same time that it would lead to Mad. Grisi taking her farewell of the lyric stage, on the boards where she first made her *debut* in the metropolis. A contradiction of this statement having appeared in some of our contemporaries, who assume to be well informed on operatic matters, we take this opportunity of again assuring our readers that the fact is exactly as we originally reported it, and that the subscribers to Her Majesty's next season will have the opportunity of hearing both the above-named *artistes*, and that the positive farewell of the "great Grisi" will take place on that stage. It is to be regretted that those who profess to enlighten the public with reference to the movements of the musical and dramatic world, do not refer for authentic information to our pages, wherein only the earliest intelligence of such matters is to be found.

MUSIC AND THEATRES IN PARIS.

(From our own Correspondent.)

Sept. 27, 1860.

THE special performance at the Opéra Comique for the benefit of the Christians in Syria, which I just mentioned in my last, was a very brilliant affair. The house was crowded, and, though the programme was not exhausted till past one, all kept their places to the end. After the *Chaises à Porteurs*, in which Condere and Mlle. Lemercier sang and acted with wonderful spirit, a little disturbance arose at the moment of lifting the curtain for *L'Etoile du Nord*. Only the first act had been announced, but the audience had made up their minds that this implied the overture, and on finding that it was omitted, set up a general clamour. The register had to come forward and explain, that as only the first act was promised in the bills, and nothing said of the overture, the management had not expected it would be called for, and had not therefore provided the double orchestra of Sax's instruments which were necessary to its execution. After a while the audience got the logic of this argument into their heads and allowed matters to take their course. Mad. Ugalde sang the part of Catherine, in which she acquitted herself as admirably as ever and was called before the curtain. A pleasant little opera, *Ma Tante Dort*, originally produced at the Lyrique with great success, followed, and Mad. Ugalde appeared in the part of Martine, originally created by her. All the fun and vivacity shown by her on the first production of the opera were equally at command now; and both she and Mocker, who played Scapin, were recalled at the end. The great point of interest of the evening, however, was the interlude, in which Mlle. Monrose sang three pieces from the *Pardon de Ploërmel*. As this rising young vocalist is about shortly to essay the part of Dinorah, great curiosity was felt to know how she would probably acquit herself of the arduous undertaking. The triumphant manner in which Mlle. Monrose surmounted the vocal difficulties of the celebrated *Ombre légère*, and the grace and sprightliness of her acting, afforded the most favourable augury of her success in interpreting the entire rôle of Dinorah. After the buffo duet, "Château-Trompette," sung by M. Berthelier and Mlle. Lemercier, an excerpt from *Fra Diavolo*, and the Beaumont-Cohen cantata, in honour of the Napoleonic festival, brought this long and well-filled evening to a worthy conclusion. The *Petit Chaperon Rouge* of Boieldieu, revived last season after an interval of many years, has been again brought forward at this house. The part of Comte Rodolphe is now played by M. Montaubry, who is as accomplished a comedian as he is a graceful singer.

The Grand Opera still goes on with *Semiramis*, and the sisters Marchisio are still the life and soul of Rossini's great work. *Pierre de Medicis* makes 'an occasional appearance in the bills. *Le Prophète*, whose advent has been imminent for some time, is retarded by the illness of Mad. Tedesco. Meanwhile *Guillaume Tell* is in preparation, and Mlle. Carlotta Marchisio will sing the part of Mathilde, restoring the air and scena which had been omitted since the reduction of the opera to three acts. The ballet which Mlle. Taglioni has invented for Mlle. Emma Livry, in whom the embryo of a second Carlotta Grisi is detected by the choreographers, will make its appearance about the middle of next month. The young *danseuse* is daily rehearsing her part with a zeal and application which are directed and stimulated by the counsels of her celebrated patroness. Some of the *pas* in which Mlle. Livry is to shine are spoken of with raptures of anticipation. In particular are mentioned a certain Mazurka in the first tableau to which all previous mazurkas are to be as barbarous jigs; a *valse des rayons*, destined to illuminate the second tableau with splendours which its title render it difficult to define; a *pas noble* which will in future be danced only by permission of the College of Heraldry; and lastly a *pas finale*, which will in every way deserve its designation by being the *ultima thule* of the choreographic art, beyond which comes chaos and the primitive "double shuffle" again.

Before I leave the operas let me mention that the manager of the Opéra Comique had determined to cast the part of Hoel in the *Pardon*, which, as I have said, he is about to produce, to Mlle. Wertember, who had already played parts written originally for bass voices. Meyerbeer is said to have approved the arrangement. The opera in three acts by Scribe and M. Offenbach is in rehearsal,

and it is to be produced with great splendour of scenery and decoration.

The Italian opera season is expected to be very brilliant this winter, and it is said the subscription list is already crowded with the highest names among the wealthy and the aristocratic.

At the Théâtre Lyrique an opera in one act is said to be in rehearsal, the words of which are by MM. Theodore Barrière and Carré, and the music by M. Leo Delibes. M. Maillart's opera, *Les Pêcheurs de Catane*, is also in active preparation. There has been a squabble between the director of this house, M. Retz, and a composer, M. E. Reger, author of *Salam* and *Maitra Wolfram*. The latter had written the music to a libretto by MM. Michel Carré and Jules Barbier in three acts, and, according to an agreement with the previous manager, M. Carvalho, the work was to have been produced at the opening of the theatre. This was the term fixed. When M. Retz assumed the management he begged M. Reger to put off the production of his opera to the month of December, and with the consent of the other collaborators, the delay was granted. The manager, under pretext of having made fresh engagements, then sought to adjourn the opera *sine die*, but the authors have very naturally refused to accept so uncertain an arrangement, and the affair is accordingly to be referred to a court of law, unless the *Société des Auteurs* should exercise its power in favour of the composer and his fellow labourers. No amount of damages, however high, compensates a composer for the suppression of a work on which he may have bestowed all the resources of his talents and his happiest inspirations, and in which he may have built with reason the hope of enhanced fame.

The Gymnase has produced a new piece in four acts, entitled *Le Voyage de M. Perrichon*, which turns on the opposite means employed by two suitors for the hand of his daughter to gain the good graces of an honest French *bourgeois*. One has saved the life of the father of his beloved, and reckons on his gratitude; the other has had his life saved by the same individual, and builds on the love of protection and patronage which is natural to the human bosom in opposition to the repugnance commonly felt at being under an obligation. At first the suitor who reckons on the meaner motive carries everything before him; but the betrayal of his deliberate designs opens the eyes of the *bourgeois* to the baseness of the impulse he had followed, and reinstates the rival in his good graces. The idea is well worked out, and contains a lesson on human weakness which is amusingly conveyed. M. Geoffroy, so celebrated for his manner of rendering the type of the *Bourgeois de Paris*, plays M. Perrichon, and seems likely to establish the character as a popular favourite. At the Variété a novelty, entitled *Une Chasse à St. Germain*, has been successful, although very stale in idea. An unfortunate painter about to contract a marriage is persecuted by three former mistresses, whom he contrives to pass off for the flames of as many friends.

Henri Monnier has also appeared again in the well-known character of Joseph Prudhomme, which he has had the credit of inventing, and the advantage of trading on for the last thirty years. *Joseph Prudhomme chef de Brigands* is the new phase in which he now introduces him; but, although there is undoubted fun in the idea, and Monnier is still amusing in the part, the notion is too worn out to afford ground for a very brilliant success.

LIVERPOOL. — (From our own Correspondent.) — The Philharmonic Society gave their eighth subscription concert on Tuesday night before a fashionable audience. The vocalists were Mlle. Titens, Signors Giuglini, Vialletti, and Valsovani. The concert was a very great success, and Signor Giuglini, who was in unusually good voice, sang "Spirto gentil" (*La Favorita*), and "Aurora che sorgerai" (*La Donna del Lago*), delightfully. Mlle. Titens' solos were, "Non mi dir" (*Don Giovanni*), and "The Last Rose of Summer." Both were given in perfect style; and the fair Teutonic *prima donna* fairly astonished the amateurs by the expression and the simplicity of her rendering of Moore's charming ballad. The band played Spohr's symphony in D for the first time in Liverpool in admirable style, and the audience appeared to thoroughly appreciate it. Mad. Grisi and Signor Mario sing at the next concert on Tuesday. — Our Italian opera season commences at the Theatre Royal on Monday, and we

are to have six performances in a fortnight. The artists are Mesdames Grisi, Viardot, Sedlatzek, and Orvil; Signors Mario, Dragone, Ciampi, &c., who are to sing in *Troatore*, *Martha*, *Don Giovanni*, *Macbeth*, *Norma*, and *Rigoletto*.—The Savage Club and our Literary and Dramatic Society gave a second performance in aid of the "Brough Memorial Fund" at the Theatre Royal on Tuesday night; and, in spite of the great attractions elsewhere, there was a good house, and the burlesque of the *Forty Thieves* went off amidst most uproarious laughter. Mr. G. A. Sala read his address in the course of the evening.—In the concert room of St. George's Hall, Mr. and Mrs. German Reed and Mr. John Parry have made quite a hit, and the room has been nightly crowded by the *élite* of Liverpool.

Advertisements.

HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE.—ROYAL ENGLISH

OPERA.—Season 1860-61.—The admirable situation of this great operatic establishment, its unparalleled acoustic properties, unequalled musical capabilities, and unrivalled lyrical resources, together with the flattering success which attended his late Italian Season, has determined the Lessee to venture on the experiment of producing at Her Majesty's Theatre a series of English Operas, during a certain portion of each year. The Season will commence on Monday, the 8th of October next. As will be seen by the accompanying list, the first vocal and instrumental talent has been secured, and will further be secured, no matter at what expense. The lessee and manager of this vast establishment, not being a vocalist himself, can have no professional jealousies—his only aim, in duty to his patrons and subscribers, will be to put the "right man in the right place." The services of Mr. Sims Reeves are already secured, and negotiations are pending in addition to the following engagements:—Soprano:—Miss Parpa, her first appearance at this theatre; Miss Jenny Bauer, from the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, her first appearance at this theatre; Miss Alessandri, from the principal theatres in Spain and Italy, her first appearance in this country; and Mad. Lemmens-Sherrington, her first appearance on the stage; contraltos:—Miss Laura Baxter and Miss Fanny Huddart; tenors:—Mr. Sims Reeves, Mr. Parkinson, Mr. George Perren, Mr. Terrott, and Mr. Swift (from La Pergola, Florence, &c.), his first appearance at this theatre; baritones:—Mr. Rosenthal and Mr. Santley, his first appearance at this theatre; buffo:—Mr. George Honey, his first appearance at this theatre; basses:—Mr. J. G. Patey, Mr. Bartleman, and Mr. Hermann. Conductor:—Mr. Charles Hallé; Leader:—Mr. H. Blagrove. A new and original opera, composed expressly for this theatre, will be produced on the opening night, Monday, October 8th, entitled *ROBIN HOOD*, Music by G. A. Macfarren, Libretto by John Oxenford, Esq.; with new scenery under the superintendence of Beverley; in which Mr. Sims Reeves, Mr. George Perren, Mr. George Honey, Mr. J. G. Patey, Mr. Santley, Mad. Lemmens-Sherrington, &c., will make their appearances; and shortly afterwards will be presented another new and original grand romantic opera, also composed expressly for this theatre, entitled the *AMBER WITCH*, from the pen of that popular composer, W. V. Wallace; together with other new operas of importance by eminent native composers. The whole of the splendid and unique appointments of Her Majesty's Theatre, both before and behind the curtain, will be made available in giving effect and comfort to the audience departments. An elegant new dress balcony has been erected, after the most approved Parisian style, combining both convenience and comfort. The scenic department under the superintendence of Mr. William Beverley and assistants: prompter, Mr. Gray; singer, Signor Fontana; costumiers, Miss Dickinson and M. J. Laureys (de Paris); the machinery, &c., by Mr. Tucker; the properties by Mr. Needham; ballet master, Mons. Massot; acting manager, Mr. Mapleson; stage manager, Mr. Robert Roxby. Particular care and attention has been bestowed on the formation of the Orchestra and Chorus, which will be considerably augmented, the whole having been carefully selected, under the immediate superintendence of Mr. Charles Hallé. This Theatre having hitherto been devoted to the production and performance of Italian Lyric Drama, the lessee (at the suggestion of numerous subscribers and habitués) has been induced to give few representations of Italian Operas, which will positively be limited to 20 nights, commencing on Wednesday, the 10th of October, to be continued three nights weekly, until the 15th of December, alternately with the English Operas. The lessee has, therefore, at an enormous outlay, secured the eminent services of those renowned artists Mlle. Titiens and Sig. Giuglini, together with other principal artists of celebrity, whose names will be found in the following detailed list of Italian engagements:—Soprani, Mlle. Titiens, Mlle. Vaneri, and Mad. Lemaire; baritoni, Sig. Valcova; and Sig. Gasser; buffo, Sig. Clampi; bassi, Sig. Violetti and Sig. Castelli; tenori, Sig. Soldi, Sig. Mercuriali, and Sig. Giuglini. Conductor, Sig. Arditi. For the ballet diversions, Mlle. Morlacchi, &c. The repertoire will be selected from the following favourite operas:—*Il Trovatore*, Verdi; *La Sonnambula*, Bellini; *Ernani*, Verdi; *Lucrezia Borgia*, Donizetti; *Don Pasquale*, Donizetti; *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, Rossini; *Gli Ugonotti*, Meyerbeer; *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Donizetti; *La Traviata*, Verdi; *I Puritani*, Bellini; *Don Giovanni*, Mozart; *Norma*, Bellini; *Rigoletto*, Verdi; *Marta*, Flotow; *I Vesperi Siciliani*, Verdi; *Obéron*, Weber; &c. The above English and Italian arrangements can only be realised at an enormous outlay; Mr. E. T. Smith looks with perfect confidence for adequate remuneration to the support of the nobility, gentry, subscribers, and the public, whose kind and unvarying patronage has enabled him to hold the reins of management through so many seasons at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, and especially through his late campaign at Her Majesty's Theatre, profitably and triumphantly. Notwithstanding the vast additional expense necessarily incurred in the engagement of such celebrated singers, besides a double company of artists for both languages, the prices of admission will be at the same reduced rates, both for the English as well as the Italian performances. The subscription list for the first 60 nights, or 30 English and 30 Italian, at the option of the subscriber, is now ready, and may be seen at the box-office, under the portico of the theatre, which is open daily, from 10 to 6, under the direction of Mr. Nugent, and where boxes, stalls, and places may be secured for any period in any part of the house. The doors will open at half-past 7, and the performances commence at 8 o'clock, on each evening throughout the season. All applications respecting the artists for public and private concerts in town or country, to be addressed to Mr. Mapleson, the musical agent, at the theatre, or 12 Haymarket. Prices of admission:—Pit stalls, 7s. 6d.; balcony, 5s.; first circle, 4s.; second circle, 3s.; upper box circle seats, 2s.; pit, 2s. 6d.; gallery, 1s.; gallery side stalls, 1s. 6d.; gallery stalls, 3s.; private boxes, upper box, half circle, to hold four persons, 10s.; private box, third tier, to hold four persons, £1. 1s.; private box, second tier, to hold four persons, £1. 11s. 6d.; private boxes, first, second, and grand tiers, two guineas, three guineas, and four guineas.

Notice.

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The Musical World.

LONDON: SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 1860.

NOT long since we had occasion to praise in unqualified terms certain excerpts from the new issue in progress ("deuxième édition, entièrement refondue et augmentée de plus de moitié") of a work upon which the reputation of M. Fétis as a bibliographer and musical encyclopedist is destined mainly to rest. In the first edition of the *Biographie Universelle des Musiciens*, the article "Beethoven"—to say nothing of some hundred others—was notably deficient. The deficiency, with commendable research, has been supplied in the new edition, and we now know all about the great "tone-poet's" genealogy, &c., which untiring industry could obtain, and as much about the scope and meaning of his compositions as the æsthetic perception and critical acumen of M. Fétis enabled him to furnish. This performance, indeed—although we altogether dissent from the Belgian historiographer and theoretical analyser in his narrow views of the later productions of the master—warranted the belief that equal care and diligence would be expended on the sequel. But whether M. Fétis thought he had done enough in perfecting his "Beethoven," and wished that "*aperçu*" to shine in his musical galaxy, like Sirius among the fixed stars, with such superior brightness as to preclude a nice examination of the others, we have no means of deciding. All we can presume to say is, that some of the lesser luminaries are presented in such opaque confusion as to defy the investigating telescope; and as an instance of this unaccountable disparity we would point to the item, "Balfe"—or "Balph," as M. Fétis orthographically suggests. We do not pretend for a moment to rank our Balfe, or "Balph," among the stars of the first magnitude. He is not an Arcturus, much less a Sirius; but he may be compared to one of those asteroids of the second order, in the constellation "Orion," by help of whose twinkling we are permitted to communicate polycopically with the most distant of the *nebulae*, and to know that they consist of neither more nor less than conglomerates of solar systems closely resembling that in which we have ourselves sempiternally revolved. Balfe or "Balph" was almost the first to pierce the darkness of foreign prejudice, and to show us that the Italian, the German, and the Frenchman—who, in the musical hemisphere, had hitherto loomed in the far open, as misty and impenetrable *nebulae*—were very much like ourselves. As with ourselves their ears were tickled by the strains of Balfe, the eyes of whose Muse, if not illuminating the art-universe with a broad light like that of the eyes of the Muses of the demigods of harmony, still twinkled with a pleasant roguish twinkle that it was comfortable to contemplate. Now the item, "Balfe," or "Balph," in the *Biographie* of M. Fétis, is just as unsatisfactory as the item "Beethoven" (or "Beethoven") is the opposite. Whence illæ lachrymæ?

Not many years ago M. Jules de Glimes came to London with ambassadorial functions. He had been despatched as an emissary from M. Fétis, to pick up scraps of information concerning British music and British musical practitioners. The contrapuntally erudite and historiographically laborious Walloon had suddenly come to the conclusion that, after all, a "*Biographie Universelle*" would not be a "*Biographie Universelle*" unless it were (*tant soit peu*) universal, and that to be universal he must, maugre his beard, include a handful of the British Isles. Man, Wight, Alderney, Sark—even the Orkneys, although King Lot of old was a great patron of minstrels, and Sir Dinadam, one of his knights, is storied to have made "the worst lay that ever harper sung with harp or with any other instrument"—might be omitted; but England, which gave birth to Purcell and fame to Handel, *not*; Scotland, where Mary Stuart sang to the accompaniment of Rizzio, *not*; and Ireland, where grew the melodies to which Moore attuned his lyre, *not*; at any rate not without penalty. So M. de Glimes, accredited to the post of "Charged with Affairs," proceeded straight to Ostend, and, without stopping to swallow one *huitre* at the Flemish Broadstairs, set sail for perfidious Albion, where (as usual) he was received with open cliffs at Dover. His credentials were endorsed, and the nature of his mission, set forth and published in the columns of *The Musical World*, was made patent to the realm, from Mutton Island to the Wash, from Portland Bill to Lissiemouth—throughout the breadth and length, in short ("*bref*"), of the three Kingdoms, not rejecting the pugnacious Principality. Are we to reconnoitre the item "Balfe," or "Balph," in the Fétisian sheets, as the first instalment of M. de Glimes' researches? By Hercules!—nay. We, who know and appreciate the moral and artistic stature of that excellent and most worthy musician, should be loth to believe it. Not only is the biography of the minstrel of Loughbrickland scanty and imperfect; not only is it crammed with errors,—but worse than all, it is tempered with a spirit of supercilious acrimony, for which, in the days of King Anguish or Brian Baroimhe, the hosts of Ierne would have invaded the straight and muddy marches of Flanders, in a fleet of flat-bottomed boats. The whole tone of the "item," indeed, is so uncharitable and (as Voltaire may have said somewhere) "acerbe," that we have scarcely patience to quote more than a passage or "so."

"Balph," it appears, was born, not at Dublin—as the *Conversations-Lexicon* and Mr. Balfe alike assert—but at Limerick. Although endowed with "*la plus heureuse organisation pour la musique*," he "never made any serious study of composition." He has, nevertheless, "obtained successes as a singer, with a mediocre voice," and "*improvised* some twenty operas little remarkable for invention," but evidencing, on the other hand, "instinct, a good feeling for harmony, and a knowledge of instrumentation." *Va pour la vingtaine d'opéras!* ("And thus departed Sir Pedivere of the Straight Marches"). That Balph is "*un homme d'esprit*," however, M. Fétis admits; and this, we are told, has enabled him to draw more advantages from his faculties than they seemed to promise. This, moreover, probably enabled him to compose an opera by the late O'Rourke (Rooke)—viz. *Amalia*, or *the Love-Test*—which, according to M. Fétis, Balph "*fit représenter à Londres*," in 1838, a year after his *JEANNE GREY* had achieved a *fiasco*, and three years after his *ITALIAN* opera, *L'Assedio di la Rochelle*, was

brought out at Her Majesty's Theatre, and "*eut QUELQUE succès*."

"Here's a coil"—says Nurse to Juliet. "Enter Rommi"—*we* had almost said. First, *Amalia* (*Amilie*)—as all the world (except M. Fétis) knows—was Rooke's, not Balfe's; secondly, Balfe wrote an opera entitled *Catherine Grey*, but never an opera called *Jeanne Grey*; thirdly, *The Siege of Rochelle* was an English, not an Italian, opera, and—as all the world knows (except M. Fétis)—Balfe's first production on the English stage; given, too, not as M. Fétis states, with "*quelque succès*," but with enormous and long-continued success, at Drury Lane Theatre.*

Next we are told that the book of *The Maid of Artois* was founded on that of the ballet and opera of *Clari*, when (except M. Fétis) all the world knows that *Clari* is almost identical with *Linda di Chamounix*, while *The Maid of Artois* is derived from *Manon L'Escaut*—the name by which it is recognised everywhere on the Continent. *Apropos* of *Manon L'Escaut*, we are advised that, "little scrupulous in the choice of ideas, Balph had borrowed from several operas then in vogue in order to fabricate his own; but a waltz by Strauss, of which he had made an air, sung by Malibran with marvellous *verve*, ensured the success of this work!" *The Maid of Artois*, nevertheless—like *AMILIE*, *Falstaff*, and *Joan of Arc*—"*was written too rapidly to find place among real works of art, although connoisseurs recognised some progress, on the score of originality, in Falstaff*." *Diadeste*, we are told, "*did not succeed*;" *Keolanthe* had but "*a mediocre success*;" the *Puits d'Amour*—represented at the Opéra Comique in 1843—"destitute of originality," had some good qualities ("*du mouvement*")—a dash of which would not make the *Biographie* less readable—among others), and succeeded both at home and abroad; *The Bohemian Girl* evinced "progress, and showed that Balph had been sensible to the criticism of the Parisian journals" (!!); *The Daughter of St. Mark* is merely named; *L'Etoile de Seville* (in Paris—1846) failed, "notwithstanding that the principal parts were entrusted to Gardoni and Mad. Stoltz;" while *The Bondman* and *The Maid of Honour*, brought out *the same year* (three grand operas in one year, we think, would puzzle even Balfe), "*created little sensation*." The *Quatre Fils Aymon*† escapes animadversion (*mirabile dictu*!). "Of all the works of Balph this is the one which has achieved the most uniform success, in France, Germany, England, and Holland. "Although it exhibits the same negligence and over-facility of composition" as its predecessors, "it cannot be denied" (what a pity for M. Fétis!) "that the *Quatre Fils Aymon* is his best work, and that it contains *some pretty things*." How condescending! *The Sicilian Bride*, *The Devil's in it*, *Duca e Pittore* (Trieste), and *The Rose of Castille*, not being even mentioned, we must presume the accurate bibliographer was unaware of their existence; and yet all the world knows (except M. Fétis) that *The Rose of Castille* "ran" for nearly two seasons, and is still considered one of the most popular works of its composer. *Satanella*, and an elementary work called *Indispensable Studies for a Soprano Voice* (of which we never heard) are named in a breath, as the sum total of Balfe's exploits between the years 1852 and 1859 inclusive. "*According to the journals*"

* The *Siege of Rochelle* was first performed on the 29th of October, 1835.

† Produced at the Princess's Theatre, under the title of *Geraldine*.

‡ Produced at the Princess's Theatre, under the name of *The Castle of Aymon*.

* The Lay of King Mark of Cornwall.

—says M. Fétis—“*Satanella*, a romantic opera in three acts, obtained a brilliant success, and is regarded in England as the composer's best work.”

The early career of Balph in Italy, whether as singer or composer, would appear, according to M. Fétis, to have been in no respect luckier than his career at home and across the *Manche*. Three Italian operas, given successfully at Palermo, Florence, and Milan, in the last of which, *Enrico IV.*, Mlle. Roser (afterwards Mad. Balfe) appeared, must have been heard, if we read aright, with indifference. *Enrico IV.* was condemned for the “numberless reminiscences” remarked by the public. As a singer Balph was especially unfortunate, his *début* (as Signor Balfi) at the Italian Opera in Paris (1825) being a failure, in consequence of a barytone voice “*mal timbrée*,” inexperience of the stage, and his association with “excellent singers” in the same opera (*Il Barbiere*); nor does he ever seem to have redeemed this mishap. *Enfin* he was fairly driven out of Italy. “At the Fenice (*Venice*), Balph had the unhappy idea of mutilating the *Crociato* of Meyerbeer, by introducing pieces of his own composition, and others of Rossini and Donizetti.” (We should have termed this *amplifying*). “The indignation of Italy against this act of barbarism obliged Balph to quit the country.”

To which (if true) Mr. Bunn (and the English public) are indebted for *The Siege of Rochelle*, and a long list of operas, almost every one of which, in spite of M. Fétis, were successful and deservedly successful. We had always looked upon Balfe as one of the luckiest of composers, and contemplated his career as one of uninterrupted sunshine and prosperity. But M. Fétis has opened our eyes to the truth. There was never at any period so unlucky a composer, or one whose successive efforts have been received so coldly and rewarded so miserably. Poor Balfe—or “Balph!”

To end with the beginning. M. Fétis informs us that Balph's first instructors were his father and Horn*; whereas all the world (except M. Fétis) knows that Bandmaster Meadows taught him the rudiments of music, and then placed him under Hicky (or Hickie) of Wexford. True Balph was subsequently articulated to Horn for seven years, and ultimately studied with O'Rourke (Rooke), of whose best opera, *Amilie*, M. Fétis makes him out the composer. And all these blunders in a book of reference! Have we been reading a suppositious *Biographie*?—a *Fetisius Hypobolimeus*? In that case we must proffer the foregoing remarks as our *Confutatio Fabulae Burdonum*. Truly M. Fétis would be a wonderful bibliograph, if (as some one wrote, with less justice, of Joseph Scaliger) “*il avoit l'esprit autant posé comme il l'a bizarre*.” To conclude, every English amateur will protest against the article “Balfe,” or “Balph,” in the *Biographie Universelle des Musiciens*, as a tissue of misrepresentations in the form of a libel.

PETIPACE OF WINCHELSEA.

SOME weeks since we protested against an injustice done to the memory of Hoffmann, whose music is generally ridiculed, in the words of a celebrated French critic, as *de la musique de littérature*; the fact being that Hoffmann was a professional musician, orchestral conductor, and composer before he wrote any of those tales by which he is now chiefly and indeed almost exclusively known. However, we have shown our readers an article by Weber in which

the composer of *Der Freischütz* expresses with enthusiasm his approbation of Hoffmann's *Undine*, and if it delighted him, surely it cannot matter much, as far as Hoffmann's reputation is concerned, who is dissatisfied with it. There is another writer, greater than Hoffmann, whose musical pretensions are never questioned in the present day, though numbers of his contemporaries refused to admit them, not on the ground that the music he gave to the public was worthless, but on the very simple plea that it was the composition of another person. We allude to Jean Jacques Rousseau, the author and accredited composer of *Le Devin du Village*; the Rousseau of the *Confessions*, who reproaches himself so bitterly with having stolen a ribbon, passes complacently over a hundred acts of meanness committed by him, and ends by declaring that any one who may come to the conclusion that he, Rousseau, is *un malhonnête homme*, is himself “a man to be smothered” (*un homme à étouffer*).

Le Devin du Village is undoubtedly the work of Jean Jacques Rousseau, as far as the libretto is concerned, but it can be shown on better evidence, even than that on which the charge of ribbon-stealing rests (for which we have only Rousseau's own word), that the music was the production of Granet, a composer residing at Lyons.

One day in the year 1751, Pierre Rousseau, called Rousseau of Toulouse, to distinguish him from the numerous other Rousseaus living in Paris, and known as the director of the *Journal Encyclopedique*, received a parcel containing a quantity of manuscript music, which, on examination, turned out to be the score of an opera. It was accompanied by a letter, addressed like the parcel itself, to *M. Rousseau, homme de lettres, demeurant à Paris*, in which a person signing himself Granet, and writing from Lyons, expressed a hope that his music would be found worthy of the illustrious author's words, that he had given appropriate expression to the tender sentiments of Colette and Colin, &c. Pierre Rousseau, though a Journalist, understood music. He knew that Granet's letter was intended for Jean Jacques, and that he ought to return it with the music to the post office, but the score of the *Devin du Village*, from the little he had seen of it, interested him, and he not only kept it until he had made himself familiar with it from beginning to end, but even showed it to a friend, M. de Bellissent, one of the conservators of the Royal Library, and a man of great musical acquirements. As soon as Pierre Rousseau and De Bellissent had quite finished with the *Devin du Village*, they sent it back to the post office, whence it was forwarded to its true destination.

Jean Jacques had been expecting Granet's music, and, on receiving the opera in a complete form, took it to La Vaupalière the farmer-general, and offered it to him, directly or indirectly, as a suitable piece for Mad. de Pompadour's theatre at Versailles, where several operettas had already been produced. La Vaupalière was anxious to maintain himself in the good graces of the favourite, and purchased for her entertainment the right of representing the *Devin du Village*. This handsome present cost the gallant financier the sum of six thousand francs. However, the opera was performed, was wonderfully successful, and was afterwards produced at the Académie, when Rousseau received four thousand francs more—so at least say some authorities who derive their information from the books of the theatre—though, according to Rousseau's own statement in the *Confessions*, the Opera sent him only fifty *louis*, which he declares he never asked for, but which he does not pretend to have returned.

* Composer of “Cherry ripe,” &c.

Rousseau "confesses," with studied detail, how the music of each piece in the *Devin du Village* occurred to him; how he at one time thought of burning the whole affair (a conceit by the way which has since been rendered commonplace by amateur authors in their prefaces); how his friends succeeded in persuading him to do nothing of the kind; and how, at last, he wrote the drama, and sketched out the whole of the music in six days, so that, when he arrived with his work in Paris, he had nothing to add but the recitative and the "*remplissage*"—by which we suppose he means the orchestral parts. In the next page he tells us that he would have given anything in the world if he could only have had the *Devin du Village*, performed for himself alone, and have listened to it with closed doors as Lulli is reported to have listened to his *Armide*, executed for his sole gratification. This egotistical pleasure might, perhaps, have been enjoyed by Rousseau if he had really composed the music himself, for when the Académie produced his second *Devin du Village*, of which the music was undoubtedly his own, the public positively refused to listen to it, and hissed it until it was withdrawn. If the director had persisted in representing the piece the theatre would doubtless have been deserted.

But to return to the original score which, as Rousseau himself informs us, wanted nothing, when he arrived in Paris, except what he calls the "*remplissage*" and the recitative. He had intended, he says, to have *Le Devin* performed at the Opera, but M. de Oury, the intendant of the Menus Plaisirs, was determined it should first be brought out at the Court. A duel was very nearly taking place between the two directors, when it was at last decided by Rousseau himself that Fontainebleau, Mad. de Pompadour (and La Vaupalière), should have the preference. Whether Granet had omitted to write recitative or not, it is a remarkable fact that recitative was wanted when the piece came to be rehearsed, and that Rousseau allowed Jéliotte the singer to supply it. This he mentions himself, as also that he was not present at any of the rehearsals—for it is at rehearsals above all that a sham composer runs the chance of being detected. It is an easy thing for any man to say that he has composed an opera, but it may be difficult for him to correct a very simple error made by the copyist in transcribing the parts. However, Rousseau admits that he did not attend rehearsals and that he did not compose the recitative, which the singers required forthwith, and which had to be written almost beneath their eyes.

But what was Granet doing in the meanwhile? it will be asked. In the meanwhile Granet had died. And Pierre Rousseau and his friend M. de Bellissent? Rousseau of Toulouse, supported by the Conservator of the Royal Library, accused Jean Jacques openly of fraud in the columns of the *Journal Encyclopédique*. These accusations were repeated on all sides, until at last Rousseau undertook to reply to them by composing new music to the *Devin du Village*. This new music the Opera refused to perform, and with some reason, for it appears (as the reader has seen) to have been detestable. It was not executed until after Rousseau's death, and at the special request of his widow, when, in the words of Grimm, "all the new airs were hooted without the slightest regard for the memory of the author."

It is this utter failure of the second edition of the *Devin du Village* which convinces us more than anything else that the first was not from the hand of Rousseau. But let us not say that he was "*un malhonnête homme*." Probably

the conscientious author of the *Contrat Social* adopted the children of others by way of compensation for having sent his own to the "*Enfants Trouvés*."

MOLIQUE'S "ABRAHAM."

(From the *Morning Post*.)

Sept. 21.—Or the new oratorio of *Abraham*, which is to be performed this morning for the first time, we shall not be able to speak in detail until to-morrow, as the morning concerts here terminate almost simultaneously with the starting of the train that carries our despatch; but having heard a rehearsal of *Abraham*, we are now in a position to offer some general remarks upon the work which may not perhaps be unacceptable. Firstly, *Abraham* is the work of a highly educated musician, one brought up in a thoroughly good school, surrounded by the best influences, and perfectly acquainted with the greatest models. All that intelligent study, observation, and experience can confer, Herr Molique possesses completely. A master of harmony, counterpoint, form, and instrumentation, he, at least, enters upon the glorious field where artists contend for immortality, armed at all points, and ready for all emergencies that human skill can meet. It must be further observed that Herr Molique is not only a learned man, but also scrupulously conscientious; one who always does his best, who is incapable of making any concession to the "popular" taste of the day, and with whom, therefore, the dignity of art is safe. The value of an artist like Herr Molique at this really critical period of art can scarcely be over-estimated. Musical conservatives of ability were never more wanted than at the present moment, when in Germany a movement which threatens the very existence of music as an independent art is rapidly progressing, and in Italy all purity of style and loftiness of purpose are as rapidly giving way before mere sensuousness and so-called brilliancy of effect. The state in which Beethoven left musical art was a very dangerous one. The later works of that most extraordinary genius, though betokening exhaustless imagination, and revealing to us a new world of music, also exhibited a certain irregularity of form. The boundless imagination of the true Shakespeare of music could not be imitated, although it might be emulated. Another Beethoven might possibly arise, but there could be no successful follower of that wondrous master. The only characteristic of his later style that his would-be disciples have attempted to imitate (though none of them have understood it) is the irregularity of form of which we have spoken. This, the consequence of an imagination teeming with novel ideas, and a command of artistic means emanating from immense experience, that enabled him instantly to give the happiest expression to any idea whatever (powers which, in his waywardness, he perhaps sometimes abused), has been falsely regarded as the cause of his superlative greatness, and a justification for such wild, licentious theories as strike at the very root of musical art. But fortunately, soon after the death of Beethoven, there arose another very great man, who, fully understanding the situation, knew how to become master of it, and put a salutary curb upon the downward course of Phœbus's chariot. A man who had drunk deeply at the Pierian spring, who had completely infused into himself the spirit which animated Bach and Handel, a man whose sympathy was with order and regularity, whose mind was of the most classic character, but who could place his own stamp upon all he touched, and animate old forms with a new soul. That man's name was Mendelssohn. To him, then, the lovers of genuine art, the true musical conservatives, looked as to the living depository of their most sacred traditions—the most perfect illustration of their fundamental theory, that the great principles of musical art (like those of every other) are immutable, and eternally productive. As Mendelssohn was gifted with the power of expressing all that the most enlightened lovers of musical art had long thought of and hoped for, he naturally became the head and representative of a great and important movement. It is therefore not at all astonishing that Mendelssohn should have had numerous disciples. A safer model, so far as modern art is concerned, there could not possibly be. He has influenced the musical minds of the present generation far more than any contemporary composer. His vast merits have won the homage of all earnest students, and the great success of his works has stimulated them to follow in his footsteps. That the influence of Mendelssohn should not be felt by an artist of kindred spirit like Molique, that the mind of the author of *Elijah* should exercise no power over the thoughts or feelings of a classic musician of the present day in the composition of an oratorio, is scarcely to be expected.

September 22.—From what we have already observed with respect to Herr Molique's new oratorio of *Abraham*, produced here yesterday morning, it may be readily inferred that the work belongs to the school of Mendelssohn; and in adding that Herr Molique has occasionally followed the illustrious author of *Elijah* more closely than is consistent with perfect independence of mind, we state at once the greatest, if not the only, reproach to which the music of *Abraham* is open.

The following are the incidents which Herr Molique has selected for his oratorio:—*The departure of Abraham and his family into the land of Canaan*; *The separation of Lot and Abraham*; *The captivity of Lot and his rescue*; *The casting forth of Hagar*; and *The intended sacrifice of Isaac*. These, with appropriate commentaries, reflections, or prayers, in the form of choruses, concerted pieces, or solos, constitute the oratorio, which, though but slightly dramatic in character, is nevertheless sufficiently connected and continuous to make a satisfactory whole, whilst abundantly affording opportunities for the exercise of the musician's art.

The first thing we find to admire in Herr Molique's work is its well-sustained elevation of style. From the first note to the last it is dignified and chaste, whatever may be the passion or emotion the composer was called upon to express. The next thing is the masterly *facture* of the entire score, of which it might truly be said that not a note, or the position of a note, could be changed without mischief to the whole. Every sound has its purpose, and undeniable reasons could be given for its existence. Anything more clear, rich, or resonant than the voicing and instrumentation, it were difficult indeed to imagine; and very few, if any, masters of the present day could write such scientific and pure double counterpoint, imitations, and fugues, as we discover in Herr Molique's oratorio.

To follow so long and elaborate a work through all its details would be tedious and unnecessary. We shall therefore content ourselves with a selection of certain pieces for special remark, and commence with No. 3, an aria in G major, "Lead me, O Lord," sung by Abraham upon receiving the Divine command to depart into the land of Canaan. This has a flowing, continuous, and eminently vocal melody, full of beauty and expression. The orchestration is of the simplest; one flute, two clarinets, one bassoon, two violas, and violoncellos and double basses being the only instruments employed, and yet the effect is extraordinarily full and rich. One of the violoncellos is treated as a solo instrument; and the manner in which this is made to blend with or support the voice, and impart life and movement to the accompaniment, commands particular admiration. This is, indeed, from first to last a lovely song.

No. 8, "Let there be no strife," is another air for Abraham of a totally different character, but not less charming. Thus, in the key of F major, Abraham appeals lovingly to his brother, praying that there may be no dissension between them. With a lively and affectionate melody is united what we may term a caressing accompaniment, which contributes materially to the expression of that state of feeling in which Abraham is supposed to be. Here, too, Herr Molique exhibits the same economy with respect to means to which we have already alluded. One flute, two oboes (the first of which plays a very prominent part), two bassoons, two horns, and the so-called "string quartet" make up his orchestra.

No. 9, "Who walketh uprightly," an air in A minor, for the tenor voice, evidences still more strikingly Herr Molique's power of making a great effect with a few instruments; for here he uses but one flute, one oboe, two horns, and the string quartet. This air is unquestionably one of the most delightful and original pieces in the oratorio. The accompaniments present the very perfection of part-writing, and although very rich in so-called "figures," the voice part stands out always clearly, and commands all the attention due to it.

No. 15, "Hear our prayer," a chorus in A major for female voices only, is richly and beautifully harmonised, and also illustrates very happily that command over the resources of fugal imitation which so rarely appears in the works of composers of the present day.

No. 17, in E flat, is one of the most spirited and melodious marches ever written, and we expect soon to hear of its being played by every military band in England. Here Herr Molique employs the full orchestra, but he uses it discreetly, and although there is immense brilliancy and force in the "tutti," they are never noisy or bombastic.

In No. 19, "Praise ye the Lord," a magnificent chorus in F major, Herr Molique has put forth all his strength. The counterpoint, clear, vigorous, full of variety, and eminently vocal, is throughout of the purest and best kind; and the fugue commencing with the tenors on the words "His right hand and His holy arm," is such as nothing less than an eminent master could write. This piece brings the first part grandly to a close.

No. 22, "Let all those rejoice," a trio in E flat major for alto, tenor, and bass, is one of the finest specimens of genuine three-part counter-

point with which we are acquainted. There is scarcely any accompaniment at all to it, and the rich fulness of effect produced by the voices only in every bar is really surprising to those acquainted with the peculiar difficulties of this style of writing. "Let all those rejoice" was repeated by desire.

No. 27, "And the Lord stretched forth His hand against them," a chorus in B minor, also claims our enthusiastic praise. Full of fiery vigour and exciting passion, it quite takes the feelings by storm, and there is deep poetry in the sudden transition to the slow movement on the words "The first-born of death have devoured their strength," with which the chorus unexpectedly terminates. All this belongs to the very highest order of art.

No. 29, "Cast out this bondwoman and her son," a duet in A minor, in which Sarah demands of Abraham the expulsion of Hagar, is another gem, admirable for dramatic expression as for its strictly musical beauties.

No. 32, "Commit thy way unto the Lord," a chorus in F major, in which the composer has used nothing but common chords, though simple and primitive in character, is likewise a masterpiece in its way. This was also redemanded.

In No. 35, "Great is the Lord," a chorus in D major, Herr Molique's command over the resources of imitative counterpoint and fugue, no less than his eminence as an orchestral writer, is again triumphantly displayed.

No. 38, "Pour out thy heart before the Lord," a very lovely tenor song in A flat, and No. 42, a duet in E major, in which Abraham and Isaac rejoice together at their deliverance from the terrible ordeal through which they have passed, may also be reckoned among the best things in the oratorio.

In No. 44 (the last piece), "Great and marvellous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty," a chorus in C major, as in the other choruses we have mentioned, and also in No. 1, "Blessed is the man who trusteth in the Lord" (which we should have mentioned before), Herr Molique's science and lofty musical feeling are again strikingly exhibited.

(To be continued.)

Letter to the Editor.

DEAR SIR,—It was not without some pleasure that I found myself, in your number for Sept. 8th, the subject of a detailed musical review; because your remarks, although not flattering to the works reviewed (three songs), were written without partiality, and were free from what has been my fate on so many former occasions—personal attack. If I venture now on a course of *direct contradiction* to all you say,—if I proceed to justify *each one* of the points which you designate "faults,"—it is not without first acknowledging the trouble and pains you have bestowed on that review, nor without thanking you for the kindness with which you counsel me to "reconsider other points."

In the first place, speaking of my "Song of the Survivor," you say that "a transition to A flat (the key of the song being G) in the opening symphony, which being made nothing of subsequently, is (to say the least) superfluous." I say, in defence, is it true that *anything* in composition is "superfluous" simply because it is not subsequently made use of? Have we not hundreds of instances in which, either to suit the text, or to express some particular feeling or meaning, a transition is used which neither the subsequent text, nor the progress of the composition, will allow to be repeated? And lastly, if, for the sake of roundness of form, or unity of plan, a repetition of the symphony be made (as I have done, page 3, line 4), is it not sufficient to give the whole "figure" and rhythm, without actually reproducing the same harmonies?

Your second objection is to "a false relation" (page 1, line 3, bar 3) in the same song, between G natural in the first chord (6, 3 on F) and G# in the next (6, 5, 3 on G#). The harmony in question is this,—



I will not fill up your space with a selection of passages from

the best authors in which similar progressions of harmony occur. But I will cite no less and no more remote an authority than Mr. G. A. Macfarren, in his new book on "The Rudiments of Harmony," in which (page 12, sect. 21), in the chapter on "False relations," he states distinctly,—"False relation does not exist between two successive chords when the 3rd of the first chord is the root of the second chord." And he illustrates this by an example in the *very key* in which my "false relation" occurs; thus:—



pointing out particularly that the G in one chord, followed by G# in the next, does *not* constitute "false relation."

Your third objection, still in the same song, is to "a dissonance, composed of a major 9th, major 7th, and major 6th on D, most unceremoniously taken, and decidedly objectionable." This —



(occurring at page 2, line 2, bar 3) is, I maintain, not to be considered a discord of the 9th at all; for the bass, D, forms *no part* of the harmony, but is a *Pedal* heard previously, and continued subsequently to the discord. The chord, if it occurred suddenly, without preparation, would be certainly objectionable—but it does not; the passage before and after determining the bass note as a pedal.



On these *three* points, then, I claim to be in the right, and cannot accept your remarks as a "correction."

On the fourth point (your last objection), in reference to my song, "Still waters run deepest," I have firstly to complain that you have not done me justice in transcribing the passage you quote; a reference to the passage, as it stands in my song (page 2, line 1, bar 3), will show that you have *misquoted* the left hand. Secondly, I urge that the point in question is one upon which there may be a difference of opinion, and which ought to be considered "a matter of taste," not a fault. As you quote the passage, however, it is made to appear wrong beyond doubt, from the fact that the B flat in the left hand appears as a pedal-note, and changes to a different bass when not in concord with the harmony. As I have it, it stands thus:—



You say "What becomes of the F# on the chord of Bb?" I consider that it is resolved by the G in the next bar in the right hand. The melody and harmony meet there on the same note,

and, as the G on which F# resolves is required for the melody, it is a *matter of taste* not to anticipate the sound of it, and to keep the F# *unresolved* until then. Had I been scoring such a passage I should certainly have put the resolution, G, at the commencement of the bar (in the harmony). It would have been a G of a different tone-colour (*i. e.* some other instrument) to that G which occurs afterwards in the melody. But on the piano, where we have no such distinctions of colour of tone, it is, I think, quite justifiable to allow the *melody* to act as *harmonic resolution*; and in this case it is not only allowable, but, I think, rather *elegant* not to have the G sounded until the *melody* does so. At any rate this should remain an open question (as, indeed, should many other things) until some law shall have been laid down, and "accepted" by musicians in general, for all points of "taste" or "school." All ears are not constituted alike; all ears are not equally susceptible of distinguishing the melodic part from the accompanying harmony; nor have they all the same power of retaining the impression of a dissonant harmony, until something "satisfactory" occurs in the melody removing such impression.

Are not all the rules at present accepted in Harmony and Composition the result of "*what sounds well, and what does not?*" Does not everything we are told to do, and all we are prohibited from doing, emanate from one *uniform desire to sound well*? If, then, *all that sounds well is right*, may we not lay down another fundamental law, and say—*only "that" is wrong which sounds bad*? I think we *do* make this law in practice, and in our every-day-judgment of new music. The only question raised, but not answered, being—*What "does" sound well*? So long as we are as far from a settlement of that question as we are at present, it must remain one in which education of the ear, quickness of apprehension, sympathy, taste, fancy, love of novel effects, and a nameless variety of other influences will ever preponderate.

If, then, in looking over new compositions, all of which are *earnestly conceived* and *carefully compiled*, we come to points of objection, which are evidently *not* the work of chance or neglect, but of intention and purpose,—is it right at once to condemn them as "wrong" simply because they differ from our own idea of what is "right?"

I can scarcely hope that this long refutation will find its way into your columns, for which it is designed; but, should you be *generous* enough to insert it, I feel sure some of the points discussed will not be without interest to some of your readers, while you will be making an "amende honorable" to

Your very obedient servant,

FRANCESCO BERGER.

36 Thurloe Square, Brompton,
Sept. 22, 1860.

MUSIC IN BRUSSELS.*

BRUSSELS possesses a conservatory of music, a royal opera house, a large number of excellent performers on all the principal instruments, a pianoforte in nearly every house, and yet it cannot boast of anything like the musical activity to be found in German towns of far less importance.

Church music is, as a general rule, badly organised, both in Brussels and throughout Belgium; money is wanting to do anything distinguished by the slightest artistic value in this branch of composition. There is no deficiency of good elements for the purpose, and the new organs from the factories of Merklin-Schütze and Company are calculated to give a very satisfactory impetus to the cause, but nothing is done in the quarter where the greatest patronage might naturally be expected.

The theatres have had their periods of success and depression. The Theatre Royal has had some good artists during the past year, but the monotony of its repertory has kept people away. As the repertory can, in accordance with the prevailing taste, be renewed only by means of operas which have been successful in Paris, the difficulty of renewing it consists, in the first place, in the fact that there is scarcely any novelty worth anything produced in Paris itself; and, in the second place, in the fact that what is strikingly new requires very great artistic resources, and

* From the *Niederrheinische Musik-Zeitung*.

a frightful outlay for the *mise-en-scène*. In Paris, the Grand Opera can satisfy its ever-changing population of some hundred thousand visitors with its old operas à grand spectacle; but in Brussels, the audience that pays its money to the theatre is constantly the same, and requires something new for what it expends.

Meyerbeer's *Pardon de Ploërmel* has been the only lucky hit for the management during the past theatrical year. Mlle. Boulard, whom the Parisians could not appreciate, proved a great attraction. She has turned out an admirable artist, for true talent, when supported by practice and success, soon attains artistic maturity.

Under the above circumstances, Merelli's Italian Operatic Company was most welcome to all lovers of music. It played in the Théâtre du Cirque, a very dirty house, but one exceedingly well adapted for sound. The band was something execrable, and the chorus simply ridiculous. The two combined would have reduced their excellent conductor, Orsini, to despair, supposing such a thing were at all possible in the case of the conductor of a strolling Italian company, who can adapt himself to everything, and has been subjected to every ordeal. In spite of all obstacles and shortcomings, however, some of the performances, for instance that of *Don Pasquale* with Donizetti's charming music, reminded us, by the merit of some of the artists, as well as the southern warmth and liveliness of the whole representation, of the good times of Italian singing, and afforded a real treat.

By the repetition of his Paris Concerts, Richard Wagner has produced a sensation here also, a fact that was inevitable, considering how the public are so satiated, as I have before mentioned, by the eternal monotony in musical matters. For a considerable length of time, his concerts were the sole topic of discussion in all the local papers, as well as in all the coffeehouses and other places of public resort. The majority of the patrons of music here have left the Future to decide on the real value of Wagner's compositions, although they are convinced the composer is very anxious that his works should be appreciated by the Present.

Good orchestral music is to be heard only at the concerts of the Conservatory, under the direction of M. Fétis. The band has made considerable progress during the past year.

M. Fétis does not, however, confine himself merely to classical masterpieces; so little does he exclude the productions of his contemporaries, that he performs even unpublished overtures and symphonies. It cannot, of course, be asserted that he is invariably lucky in his selection. During the last series of concerts we heard an overture to Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, by M. de Hartog, a Dutch composer, who resides in Paris, and composes for his own pleasure—and that of his friends also—and has already published several works. The composition of characteristic overtures to tragedies is something peculiar; the only models of this kind of writing, Beethoven's overtures to *Coriolanus* and *Egmont*, stand too high to be equalled by the efforts of mere talent, and what have we, now-a-days, among composers but talent at the very most?

Herr Meyenne, one of Fétis' newest pupils, may also, by the way, lay claim to the possession of this quality. He has now come forward, although somewhat tardily, with an unpublished symphony. It was successful, as was likewise, and perhaps more deservedly, a symphony by Samuel, which contains a great deal of originality.

There was a remarkable performance, at the last concert of the Conservatory, of the finale to the second act of *Le Nozze di Figaro*. Irritated at the mutilation of this magnificent piece of composition at the Théâtre Lyrique in Paris, Fétis determined to let the public of Brussels—that is to say, the "small Parisian" public—hear what was the real effect of it when played as Mozart wrote it, and he succeeded completely in carrying out his intention.

CRYSTAL PALACE.—The first of the two farewell performances of Mad. Clara Novello, announced to take place at the Crystal Palace, previous to her final retirement from public life, came off on Wednesday, and attracted a large audience, the number of visitors approximating to thirteen thousand. At half-crown prices of admission so great a crowd at this period of the year proved the immense popularity of the singer, or, at all events, an almost universal desire to hear her for the last time. The performance consisted of the *Creation*, Mad. Novello—who, by the way, sang

the music of Eve in the third part, usually allotted to a second soprano—having for her coadjutors Mr. Wilbye Cooper and Mr. Weiss. The band and chorus together numbered about two thousand five hundred, a powerful force, doubtless, but by no means too powerful to create an effect in the central transept of the Crystal Palace. Mr. H. Blagrove was at the head of the instruments, and the regiment under his command was a capital effective working body. The chorus consisted of the Vocal Association, with draughts from the Sacred Harmonic Society and other choral institutions. The whole was placed under the direction of Mr. Benedict, so that nothing was wanting to insure a first-rate performance. The general execution was for the most part irreproachable, but Haydn's drawing-room oratorio failed to produce any marked sensation. Even the choruses, "The heavens are telling," and "Achieved is the glorious work," which almost invariably strike an audience as with a hammer, passed off with the faintest possible applause. The solos alone created anything like enthusiasm; and indeed the highest amount of excitement was justified in the case of Mad. Novello, whose singing of "With verdure clad," and "On mighty pens," was literally transcendent. "To hear Mad. Novello sing 'With verdure clad,'" as a fluent reporter of the Worcester Festival in a daily contemporary expressed himself, "was worth a long journey and much treasure." More exquisite, refined, and finished singing we never listened to. Mr. Wilbye Cooper was warmly applauded for his careful reading of "In native worth;" and Mr. Weiss, in the two bass airs, "Rolling in foaming billows" and "Now Heav'n in fullest glory shone," displayed his fine voice and manly style to eminent advantage. To-day the *Messiah* will be given for the second farewell performance of Mad. Clara Novello, who will be assisted in the solo vocal department by Mad. Sainton-Dolby, Messrs. Wilbye Cooper, Santley, and Weiss.

MR. JOHN BROUGHAM—the popular Irish comedian, formerly belonging to the Covent Garden company under Mad. Vestris, and to the Olympic under the same manageress—commences an engagement at the Haymarket Theatre on Monday, October 8, in an original three-act comedy, written by himself.

MANCHESTER—MAD. JULLIEN'S CONCERT AT THE FREE-TRADE HALL.—On Saturday last, the public of Manchester had an opportunity of hearing, for the last time, we believe, the fine band which, under the magical influences of M. Jullien, for so long a time delighted the ears of the English public. Prince George Galitzin (who assumed the conductorship) could not feel other than satisfied at the welcome bestowed upon him and the compositions of which he is the author, one of which, the "Surprise" Polka, was given with such startling and emphatic precision as to secure for it the honour of an encore, as hearty as could be desired. The solo singers were Miss Poole, Miss Dyer, and Mr. Henry Haigh—old favourites in Manchester—all of whom well sustained their reputation. During the evening, the choir, which has been trained by Mr. D. W. Banks, gave two illustrations of sacred art which were new to Manchester—a Russian chorus, very graceful in its movements, by Bortniansky, and a more weighty composition by Prince George Galitzin, "Sancta Maria." Amongst the pleasant performances by the choir of the Saturday Evening Concerts on this occasion was one we cannot overlook. At the commencement of the evening, Mr. Dixon, a member of the choir, appeared before the audience, and on behalf of the choir presented Mr. Banks with an ivory bâton, bearing the following inscription:—"Presented to D. W. Banks, Esq., by the members of the choir of the Saturday Evening Concerts, as a testimonial of their respect and esteem.—Manchester, September 15, 1860." The bâton was a beautiful example of workmanship, from the establishment of Messrs. Ollivant and Botsford. The concert for this (Saturday) evening will, we may remark, be of unusual interest, and will bring before the public of Manchester not one only, but many of the most eminent artists in Europe.—*Manchester Weekly Times*.

PARTANT POUR LA SYRIE.—It is a well-known fact that the words of the above song, which during the last few years has enjoyed a new career of publicity, were set to music by Queen Hortense. It is not, however, so generally known, perhaps, that

the [instrumentation of the song was the work of an artist still living, very advanced in age, but still hale and hearty, in Germany. The ducal Capellmeister at Gotha, L. Drouet—a near relation of the postmaster at St. Menchould, who recognised and arrested the fugitive Louis XVI.—was, in his youth, a member of the band at the court of the King of Holland, and for some time music-master of Prince Louis, now Emperor of the French. It was he who scored the above song, since become so celebrated. The Emperor has not forgotten his former master, to whom, some year or two back, he forwarded a valuable golden snuff-box, set with brilliants.

The Theatres.

OLYMPIC THEATRE.—A short extravagant farce, founded on a French vaudeville (*Un Tigre de Bengale*, we believe) and entitled *Savage as a Bear*, has been produced at this house. The plot rests altogether on the unreasonable jealousy of a certain Gregory Griffin (Mr. F. Robinson), who insists on tormenting himself and everybody around him by suspecting that Mr. Jujubes (Mr. H. Wigan), his opposite neighbour, smokes cigars and arranges mignonne for no other purpose than that of carrying on a telegraphic flirtation with Mrs. Griffin (Miss Marston). The lady makes matters worse by addressing a letter to the reputed libertine, requesting him to desist from his harmless practices, for Jujubes coming over the way, in the belief that the letter is a hoax, nearly falls into the clutches of the terrible Griffin. The wife, anxious for nothing but peace and quietness, is perpetually concealing her innocent but timid visitor from her enraged husband; but, as the unfortunate Jujubes never hides without leaving behind him some light article, such as a stick, a hat, or a shoe, he forms an ever-lengthening chain of presumptive evidence which renders Griffin more frantic than ever, till at last, discovering the innocence of Jujubes, he becomes equally extravagant in his demonstrations of friendship. The harmless, timid, civil nature of the persecuted Jujubes is represented with much characteristic humour by Mr. Horace Wigan (the adapter of the piece), and there is a blunt, bustling abigail, loyal in the service of her mistress, who is very well played by Mrs. Emden. But the jealous husband, who is, after all, the main personage of the piece, is scarcely to be rendered palatable by any artist who lacks the genius of a Robson, and Mr. F. Robinson in essaying a part altogether out of his line makes an exhibition of mere force that is neither natural nor effective. The success of the piece is moderate.

STRAND THEATRE.—Messrs. Yates and Harrington have concocted an obstreperous little piece which, with the title *Hit him—he has no Friends*, brings the entertainments at the Strand Theatre to a noisy conclusion. Mr. James Rogers enacts a gentleman of extremely nervous temperament who has fallen into dire misfortunes from the fact that he bears the same name as a wicked personage whose desertion of his wife and children is recorded in the daily papers. The lady to whom he pays his addresses indignantly rejects him, her brother is ever watchful to exterminate him in single combat, a magistrate is prompt with a warrant for his apprehension, and the people of the country inn where he seeks a refuge from persecution attribute to lunacy the excited state of his feelings. The force of the piece consists in the reckless oddity of the dialogue and the hearty self-abandonment of Mr. James Rogers to his manifold miseries. It was completely successful.

DINNER TO MR. BUCKSTONE.—The members of the Haymarket company, in return for a similar invitation given to them a few weeks ago, invited their esteemed and respected manager to a dinner on the 9th inst. Mr. Chippendale, stage-manager, was in the chair, with Mr. Charles Mathews facing him, and amongst the few visitors invited were Mr. Benjamin Webster and Mr. Robert Keeley. As the dinner was entirely of a private nature, we need only record that the numerous toasts and speeches pleasantly commemorated the harmony that has reigned throughout the establishment for so long a period, and that the health of Mr. Buckstone elicited one of the heartiest responses of the evening. The festal accompaniments reflected the highest credit on the taste and judgment of Mr. Wyld, Proprietor of the *Café de l'Europe*, and showed to every advantage the excellent *cuisine* and vinous resources of that popular refectory.

THE LIBERATOR AND THE LEVELLER.—We hear from Paris that great preparations are being made for the production of *Tannhäuser* at the Grand Opera. The only person in Paris, to judge from the newspapers, who likes Herr Wagner's music (of

which specimens, it may be remembered, were presented to the Parisians a few months since in a series of some half dozen concerts) is the Emperor Napoleon. The Emperor has had several interviews with Herr Wagner, and the result is that he is charmed with his music; though it is scarcely probable that at these interviews Herr Wagner either sang or played to his Majesty. On the other hand, it is satisfactory to know that Herr Wagner is charmed with the Emperor Napoleon. The Emperor has directed that no expense shall be spared in putting *Tannhäuser* on the stage in a style worthy of the great Republican and German Unitarian who composed it; and Herr Wagner has shown his appreciation of the great Liberator of oppressed nationalities by introducing into his perfect chrysolite of an opera the meretricious and altogether foreign element of a ballet, so as to qualify it for production at the Académie. This is very civil on both sides; and, even if *Tannhäuser* does not succeed in Paris (which, however, it *must* do if enough money is spent on it), the French Emperor will be sure to have some sort of success in Germany—that is to say, among the party to which Herr Wagner belongs, and over which he has an influence which will not appear unaccountable to those who have read any of his writings. We wonder what Napoleon I. would have thought of Herr Wagner's operas—supposing that he had heard them at a moment when there was no question about the possession of the Rhine country. He liked Méhul's *Irato*, which was written in the Italian style, but not Méhul's other operas; and, when he was asked why he had not appointed Cherubini director of his concerts, replied—ignorantly, but with a meaning that some will understand—that it was “because he liked music, and not noise.” It suits Napoleon III. just now to pretend that he likes noise, not music. However, we will say no more about *Tannhäuser* until it is brought out at the Royal English Opera—which, it is said now, will open the first week in October. *Illustrated Times*.

POETRY v. PROSE.

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